

August 8, 2003

Cares Committee:

My Name is Sandy Bond, I am a Professional employee at the Leavenworth site as well a Union President, NFFE, Local 1765, serving The Professional Employee's

Let me take this time to Thank You, for the Opportunity to be able to speak to the Cares Committee on the proposed changes at the Eastern Ks. Health Care system.

NFFE acknowledges that changes are appropriate that maintain a high standard of care to our Veterans. Some of the changes that have already been implemented such as the Surgi-Center are clearly unique and needed services for the Leavenworth site.

The Dwight D. Eisenhower's unique qualities are very present. Our services are very unique.

We do not duplicate the services that Kansas City VA provides. The Dwight D. Eisenhower does not do sophisticated surgeries or procedures. Example, Neurology, Eye Surgeries, Hemodyalis. We do provide needed services that are classified as minor surgeries in our Surgi-Center.

Example, orhopedic joint surgeries, hernia repair, Colonoscopys, Excisions of lesions, are just a few, Surgeries that the Kansas City VA cannot Absorb due to there high volume major surgery schedule.

We do a very good job of complementing the KC VA with fulfilling the needs they have as well, as the needs of our veterans, that if Leavenworth campus did not provide the waiting times could be months or years.

ICU Beds are necessary in Acute Medicine and Acute Surgery, to provide care for complications that are not forseen in-house and

those that come from pure emergencies. You cannot run a facility well, if you do not have the ability for acute services.

As well, Leavenworth provides services for KCVA in Long Term Care, Behavioral Health, and ICU when there is a overflow of patients at their facility.

Dwight D. Eisenhower absorbs Kansas City and Wichita's overflow for Acute Psych inpatient that if our services were not present would be a huge strain on the community as well could be dangerous to the veteran's health and or others in the community. We presently have a need for more Inpatient Psych beds, in order to sucessully provide care for our veteran population and the overflow from Wichita and KCVA.

At the present time it is costing significantly to out base these Psychiatric patients into the community for services.

Our in patient Acute medicine is running somewhere approximately 19-21 beds during the week and drops down on the weekend. We have the ability to run at approximately 38 approved beds. Our bed count is being controlled by administrative non-professionals to show that there is not a need for the current level of admissions or beds. When our sick veterans hit the emergency room we are transferring them to our sister Hospital in Topeka, KS., 70 miles away. There are no records as there were no admissions to our hospital. Transferring services away from Leavenworth to Topeka may also create several costs that must be weighed against any savings.

These costs include:

- The direct cost of mileage reimbursements the VA would have to pay out to veterans. Or the cost to transport the veterans to Topeka or to Contract out services.
- The cost and hardship for the families of having to travel an extra 70 miles to see their loved ones.
- The slower recovery time for patients who have less contact with their support circle as a result of the added distance.

- A decrease in customer satisfaction.
- Those veterans who say simply NO way , I am not going to Topeka or elsewhere , will be Medically compromised.
- Very Sick patients being transferred allows the chances of Risk of complications to go up tremendously.

We have a very successful Resident Training Program at the Leavenworth and Topeka campus. This program has been a salvation for both campuses. Due to our medical programs that we have on site such as surgery, internal medicine, neurology and rehab It has allowed Eastern Ks. To recruit newly graduated, quality doctors. Our facility would not be able to recruit and hire Quality Doctors if we were not involved with the University of Ks. Resident program.

A large population of Veterans, Military Retirees, Active Duty, and eligible dependents live in the area of Leavenworth, St. Joseph, Western Wyandotte County, and the surrounding communities utilize the Dwight D. Eisenhower VAMC as their primary hospital. This clearly represents an interest for the Dwight D. Eisenhower to continue Care with minimal disruption to their families, as well as a concern for National Security. As well, this population of veterans supports Keeping the Dwight D. Eisenhower open not only as a primary care clinic with an emergency room, but to provide full acute services.

The Cares VISN 15 statistics clearly show that in 2012 , Outpatient Primary Care Needs will increase 145.1% and Outpatient Specialty Care Needs in 2012 will increase 142.9%.

In-Patient Care in Medicine will increase in need in the year 2012 To 14.6%. As well, KCVA statistics have gone up equally for the year 2012.

With the continued complementing of services between the Dwight D. Eisenhower and Kansas City VA and Topeka campuses will ensure continued quality care to our veterans in the future for many years to come.

Thank You.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Lenny Bond". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the "Thank You." text.